

Cherokee language

Cherokee (CWY ᏣᎳᎩ, *Tsalagi Gawonihisdi* [dʒala 'gî gawónihis 'dî]) is an endangered-to-moribund^[a] Iroquoian language^[4] and the native language of the Cherokee people.^{[6][7][8]} Ethnologue states that there were 1,520 Cherokee speakers out of 376,000 Cherokee in 2018,^[4] while a tally by the three Cherokee tribes in 2019 recorded ~2,100 speakers.^[5] The number of speakers is in decline. About eight fluent speakers die each month, and only a handful of people under the age of 40 are fluent.^[12] The dialect of Cherokee in Oklahoma is "definitely endangered", and the one in North Carolina is "severely endangered" according to UNESCO.^[13] The Lower dialect, formerly spoken on the South Carolina–Georgia border, has been extinct since about 1900.^[14] The dire situation regarding the future of the two remaining dialects prompted the Tri-Council of Cherokee tribes to declare a state of emergency in June 2019, with a call to enhance revitalization efforts.^[5]

Around 200 speakers of the Eastern (also referred to as the Middle or Kituwah) dialect remain in North Carolina and language preservation efforts include the New Kituwah Academy, a bilingual immersion school.^[15] The largest remaining group of Cherokee speakers is centered around Tahlequah, Oklahoma, where the Western (Overhill or Otali) dialect predominates. The Cherokee Immersion School (*Tsalagi Tsunadequoquasdi*) in Tahlequah serves children in federally recognized tribes from pre-school up to grade 6.^[16]

Cherokee is polysynthetic,^[17] the only Southern Iroquoian language,^[18] and it uses a unique syllabary writing system.^[19] As a polysynthetic language, Cherokee is highly different from Indo-European languages such as English, French, or Spanish, and can be difficult for adult learners to acquire.^[6] A single Cherokee word can convey ideas that would require multiple English words to express, including the context of the assertion, connotations about the speaker, the action, and the object of the action. The morphological complexity of the Cherokee language is best exhibited in verbs, which comprise approximately 75% of the language, as opposed to only 25% of the English language.^[6] Verbs must contain at minimum a pronominal prefix, a verb root, an aspect suffix, and a modal suffix.^[20]

Extensive documentation of the language exists, as it is the indigenous language of the Americas in which the most literature has been published.^[21] Such publications include a Cherokee dictionary and grammar as well as several editions of the New Testament and Psalms of the Bible^[22] and the *Cherokee Phoenix* (CWY ጥጀᎯଓ~ା, *Tsalagi Tsulehisanhvi*), the first newspaper published by Native Americans in the United States and the first published in a Native American language.^{[23][24]}

Cherokee	CWY ᏣᎳᎩ <i>Tsalagi Gawonihisdi</i>
GWY	<i>Tsa-la-gi</i> written in the Cherokee syllabary
Pronunciation	(Oklahoma dialect) [dʒala 'gî gawónihis 'dî]
Native to	North America
Region	east Oklahoma; Great Smoky Mountains ^[1] and Qualla Boundary in North Carolina ^[2] Also in Arkansas. ^[3] and Cherokee community in California.
Ethnicity	Cherokee
Native speakers	1520 to ~2100 (2018 and 2019) ^{[4][5]}
Language family	Iroquoian <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Southern Iroquoian ▪ Cherokee
Writing system	Cherokee syllabary, Latin script
Official status	
Official language in	Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina Cherokee Nation ^{[6][7][8][9]} of Oklahoma
Regulated by	United Keetoowah Band Department of Language, History, &

Contents

Classification
History
Literacy
Geographic distribution
Dialects
Language drift
Status and preservation efforts
Education
Phonology

Consonants Orthography Vowels Tone Phonological and morphophonological processes Vowel deletion Laryngeal alternation H-metathesis Pronominal lowering Tonicity		Culture (http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/about-ukblainguage) ^{[7][8]} Council of the Cherokee Nation (http://cherokee.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=266941&GUID=C8EC5F0A-E523-49A0-92B-D-42041FCE32EAI)
Grammar Pronouns and pronominal prefixes Shape classifiers in verbs Word order		
Orthography Description Transliteration issues Unicode Blocks Fonts and digital platform support		Language codes ISO 639-2 chr (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=90)
Vocabulary Numbers Days Months Colors Word creation		ISO 639-3 cher Glottolog cher1273 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cher1273) ^[10]
Samples		Linguasphere 63-AB
Notes		
References		Pre-contact Distribution of the Cherokee Language
Bibliography Concerning the syllabary		
Further reading		Current geographic distribution of the Cherokee language
External links		
Language archives, texts, audio, video Language lessons and online instruction		

Classification

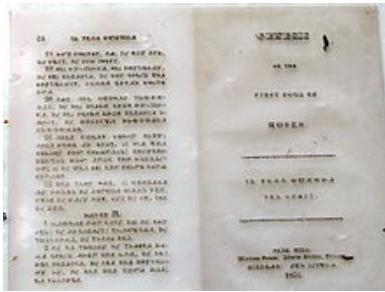
Cherokee is an [Iroquoian language](#), and the only Southern Iroquoian language spoken today. Linguists believe that the Cherokee people migrated to the southeast from the [Great Lakes](#) region about three thousand years ago, bringing with them their language. Despite the three-thousand-year geographic separation, the Cherokee language today still shows some similarities to the languages spoken around the Great Lakes, such as [Mohawk](#), [Onondaga](#), [Seneca](#), and [Tuscarora](#).

Some researchers (such as Thomas Whyte) have suggested the homeland of the proto-Iroquoian language resides in Appalachia. Whyte contends, based on linguistic and molecular studies, that proto-Iroquoian speakers participated in cultural and economic exchanges along the north-south axis of the Appalachian Mountains. The divergence of Southern Iroquoian (which Cherokee is the only known branch of) from the Northern Iroquoian languages occurred approximately 4,000-3,000 years ago as Late Archaic proto-Iroquoian speaking peoples became more sedentary with the advent of horticulture, advancement of lithic technologies and the emergence of social complexity in the Eastern Woodlands. In the

subsequent millennia, the Northern Iroquoian and Southern Iroquoian would be separated by various Algonquin and Siouan speaking peoples as linguistic, religious, social and technological practices from the Algonquin to the north and east and the Siouans to the west from the Ohio Valley would come to be practiced by peoples in the Chesapeake region, as well as parts of the Carolinas.

History

Literacy



Translation of Genesis into the Cherokee language, 1856

Before the development of the Cherokee syllabary in the 1820s, Cherokee was an oral language only. The Cherokee syllabary is a syllabary invented by Sequoyah to write the Cherokee language in the late 1810s and early 1820s. His creation of the syllabary is particularly noteworthy in that he could not previously read any script. Sequoyah had some contact with English literacy and the Roman alphabet through his proximity to Fort Lounion, where he engaged in trade with Europeans. He was exposed to English literacy through his white father. His limited

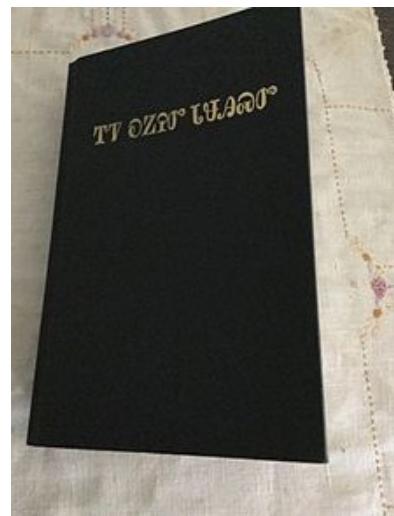
understanding of the Roman alphabet, including the ability to recognize the letters of his name, may have aided him in the creation of the Cherokee syllabary.^[25] When developing the written language, Sequoyah first experimented with logograms, but his system later developed into a syllabary. In his system, each symbol represents a syllable rather than a single phoneme; the 85 (originally 86)^[26] characters in the Cherokee syllabary provide a suitable method to write Cherokee. Some typeface syllables do resemble the Latin, Greek and even the Cyrillic scripts' letters, but the sounds are completely different (for example, the sound /a/ is written with a letter that resembles Latin D).

Around 1809, Sequoyah began work to create a system of writing for the Cherokee language.^[27] At first he sought to create a character for each word in the language. He spent a year on this effort, leaving his fields unplanted, so that his friends and neighbors thought he had lost his mind.^{[28][29]} His wife is said to have burned his initial work, believing it to be witchcraft.^[27] He finally realized that this approach was impractical because it would require too many pictures to be remembered. He then tried making a symbol for every idea, but this also caused too many problems to be practical.^[30]

Sequoyah did not succeed until he gave up trying to represent entire words and developed a written symbol for each syllable in the language. After approximately a month, he had a system of 86 characters.^[28] "In their present form, [typeface syllabary not the original handwritten Syllabary] many of the syllabary characters resemble Roman, Cyrillic or Greek letters or Arabic numerals," says Janine Scancarelli, a scholar of Cherokee writing, "but there is no apparent relationship between their sounds in other languages and in Cherokee."^[27]

Unable to find adults willing to learn the syllabary, he taught it to his daughter, Ayokeh (also spelled Ayoka).^[27] Langguth says she was only six years old at the time.^[31] He traveled to the Indian Reserves in the Arkansaw Territory where some Cherokee had settled. When he tried to convince the local leaders of the syllabary's usefulness, they doubted him, believing that the symbols were merely ad hoc reminders. Sequoyah asked each to say a word, which he wrote down, and then called his daughter in to read the words back. This demonstration convinced the leaders to let him teach the syllabary to a few more people. This took several months, during which it was rumored that he might be using the students for sorcery. After completing the lessons, Sequoyah wrote a dictated letter to each student, and read a dictated response. This test convinced the western Cherokee that he had created a practical writing system.^[29]

When Sequoyah returned east, he brought a sealed envelope containing a written speech from one of the Arkansas Cherokee leaders. By reading this speech, he convinced the eastern Cherokee also to learn the system, after which it spread rapidly.^{[28][29]} In 1825 the Cherokee Nation officially adopted the writing system. From 1828 to 1834, American missionaries assisted the Cherokee in using Sequoyah's original syllabary to develop type face Syllabary characters and print the Cherokee Phoenix, the first newspaper of the Cherokee Nation, with text in both Cherokee and English.^[32]



Cherokee Heritage Center - New Hope Church - Bible cover in Cherokee script (2015-05-27 14.09.44 by Wesley Fryer)

In 1826, the Cherokee National Council commissioned George Lowrey and David Brown to translate and print eight copies of the laws of the Cherokee Nation in the new Cherokee language typeface using Sequoyah's system, but not his original self-created handwritten syllable glyphs.^[30]

Once Albert Gallatin saw a copy of Sequoyah's syllabary, he found the syllabary superior to the English alphabet. Even though the Cherokee student learns 86 syllables instead of 26 letters, he can read immediately. The student could accomplish in a few weeks what students of English writing could learn in two years.^[31]

In 1824, the General Council of the Eastern Cherokee awarded Sequoyah a large silver medal in honor of the syllabary. According to Davis, one side of the medal bore his image surrounded by the inscription in English, "Presented to George Gist by the General Council of the Cherokee for his ingenuity in the invention of the Cherokee Alphabet." The reverse side showed two long-stemmed pipes and the same inscription written in Cherokee. Supposedly, Sequoyah wore the medal throughout the rest of his life and it was buried with him.^[30]

By 1825, the Bible and numerous religious hymns and pamphlets, educational materials, legal documents and books were translated into the Cherokee language. Thousands of Cherokee became syllabic and the syllabicity rate for Cherokee in the original Syllabary as well as the typefaced Syllabary, was higher in the Cherokee Nation, than that of literacy of whites in the English alphabet in the United States.

Though use of the Cherokee syllabary declined after many of the Cherokee were forcibly removed to Indian Territory, present day Oklahoma, it has survived in private correspondence, renderings of the Bible, and descriptions of Indian medicine^[33] and now can be found in books and on the internet among other places.

Geographic distribution

The language remains concentrated in some Oklahoma communities^[34] and communities like Big Cove and Snowbird in North Carolina.^[35]

Dialects

At the time of European contact, there were three major dialects of Cherokee: Lower, Middle, and Overhill. The Lower dialect, formerly spoken on the South Carolina-Georgia border, has been extinct since about 1900.^[14] Of the remaining two dialects, the Middle dialect (Kituhwah) is spoken by the Eastern band on the Qualla Boundary, and retains ~200 speakers.^[4] The Overhill, or Western, dialect is spoken in eastern Oklahoma and by the Snowbird Community in North Carolina^[36] by ~1,300 people.^[4] The Western dialect is most widely used and is considered the main dialect of the language.^{[6][37]} Both dialects have had English influence, with the Overhill, or Western dialect showing some Spanish influence as well.^[37]

The now extinct Lower dialect spoken by the inhabitants of the Lower Towns in the vicinity of the South Carolina–Georgia border had *r* as the liquid consonant in its inventory, while both the contemporary Kituhwa dialect spoken in North Carolina and the Overhill dialect contain *l*. Only Oklahoma Cherokee developed tone. Both the Lower dialect and the Kituhwa dialect have a "ts" sound in place of the "tl" sound of the Overhill dialect. For instance, the word for 'it is cold (outside)' is O⁹B_L (uj^ñt^ça or [uj^ñtl^á]) in the Overhill dialect, but O⁹BC (uj^ñt^çsa) in the Kituhwa dialect.



Play media

Video of Jerry Wolfe (1924–2018), speaking in English and the Kituhwa dialect of Cherokee in 2013

Language drift

There are two main dialects of Cherokee spoken by modern speakers. The Giduwa (or Kituhwah) dialect (Eastern Band) and the Otali dialect (also called the Overhill dialect) spoken in Oklahoma. The Otali dialect has drifted significantly from Sequoyah's syllabary in the past 150 years, and many contracted and borrowed words have been adopted into the language. These noun and verb roots in Cherokee, however, can still be mapped to Sequoyah's syllabary. There are more than 85 syllables in use by modern Cherokee speakers. Modern Cherokee speakers who speak Otali employ 122 distinct syllables in Oklahoma.

Status and preservation efforts

In 2019, the Tri-Council of Cherokee tribes declared a state of emergency for the language due the threat of it going extinct, calling for the enhancement of revitalization programs.^[5] The language retains about 1,500^[12] to 2,100^[5] Cherokee speakers, but an average of 8 fluent speakers die each month, and only a handful of people under 40 years of age are fluent as of 2019.^[12] In 1986, the literacy rate for first language speakers was 15–20% who could read and 5% who could write, according to the 1986 Cherokee Heritage Center.^[22] A 2005 survey determined that the Eastern band had 460 fluent speakers. Ten years later, the number was believed to be 200.^[38]

Cherokee is "definitely endangered" in Oklahoma and "severely endangered" in North Carolina according to UNESCO.^[13] Cherokee has been the co-official language of the Cherokee Nation alongside English since a 1991 legislation officially proclaimed this under the Act Relating to the Tribal Policy for the Promotion and Preservation of Cherokee Language, History, and Culture.^[39] Cherokee is also recognised as the official language of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians. As Cherokee is official, the entire constitution of the United Keetoowah Band is available in both English and Cherokee. As an official language, any tribal member may communicate with the tribal government in Cherokee or English, English translation services are provided for Cherokee speakers, and both Cherokee and English are used when the tribe provides services, resources, and information to tribal members or when communicating with the tribal council.^[39] The 1991 legislation allows the political branch of the nation to maintain Cherokee as a living language.^[39] Because they are within the Cherokee Nation tribal jurisdiction area, hospitals and health centers such as the Three Rivers Health Center in Muscogee, Oklahoma provide Cherokee language translation services.^[40]

Education

In 2008 The Cherokee Nation instigated a 10-year language preservation plan that involved growing new fluent speakers of the Cherokee language from childhood on up through school immersion programs, as well as a collaborative community effort to continue to use the language at home.^[41] This plan was part of an ambitious goal that in 50 years, 80 percent or more of the Cherokee people will be fluent in the language.^[42] The Cherokee Preservation Foundation has invested \$4.5 million into opening schools, training teachers, and developing curricula for language education, as well as initiating community gatherings where the language can be actively used. They have accomplished: "Curriculum development, teaching materials and teacher training for a total immersion program for children, beginning when they are preschoolers, that enables them to learn Cherokee as their first language. The participating children and their parents learn to speak and read together. The Tribe operates the Kituwah Academy".^[42] Formed in 2006, the Kituwah Preservation & Education Program (KPEP) on the Qualla Boundary focuses on language immersion programs for children from birth to fifth grade, developing cultural resources for the general public and community language programs to foster the Cherokee language among adults.^[43] There is also a Cherokee language immersion school in Tahlequah, Oklahoma that educates students from pre-school through eighth grade.^[44]

Several universities offer Cherokee as a second language, including the University of Oklahoma, Northeastern State University, and Western Carolina University. Western Carolina University (WCU) has partnered with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) to promote and restore the language through the school's Cherokee Studies program, which offers

Drifted Otali Sequoyah Syllabary mapping			
Otali syllable	Sequoyah syllabary index	Sequoyah syllabary chart	Sequoyah syllable
a	00	D	a
e	01	R	e
i	02	T	i
o	03	ø	o
u	04	ø'	u
v	05	ɪ	v
qwa	06	s	ga
ka	07	ð	ka
ge	08	k	ge
gi	09	y	gi
go	10	A	go
gu	11	J	gu
gv	12	E	gv
ha	13	əv	ha
he	14	p	he
hi	15	ɸ	hi
ho	16	F	ho
hu	17	Γ	hu
hv	18	χ	hv
la	19	W	la
le	20	ð'	le
li	21	ρ	li
lo	22	G	lo
lu	23	M	lu
lv	24	ɳ	lv
ma	25	ɔ'	ma
me	26	OH	me
mi	27	H	mi
mo	28	ɔ	mo
mu	29	y	mu
na	30	Θ	na
hna	31	tʂ	hna
nah	32	G	nah
ne	33	ɻ	ne
ni	34	h	ni
no	35	Z	no

classes in and about the language and culture of the Cherokee Indians.^[45] WCU and the EBCI have initiated a ten-year language revitalization plan consisting of: (1) a continuation of the improvement and expansion of the EBCI Atse Kituwah Cherokee Language Immersion School, (2) continued development of Cherokee language learning resources, and (3) building of Western Carolina University programs to offer a more comprehensive language training curriculum.^[45]

Phonology

The family of Iroquoian languages has a unique phonological inventory. Unlike most languages, the Cherokee inventory of consonants lacks the labial sounds *p*, *b*, *f*, and *v*. Cherokee does, however, have one labial consonant *m*, but it is rare, appearing in no more than ten native words.^[46] In fact, the Lower dialect does not produce *m* at all. Instead, it uses *w*.

In the case of *p*, *qw* is often substituted, as in the name of the Cherokee Wikipedia, *Wi:yiqwejdiʃ*. Some words may contain sounds not reflected in the given phonology: for instance, the modern Oklahoma use of the loanword "automobile", with the /ɔ/ and /b/ sounds of English.

Consonants

As with many Iroquoian languages, Cherokee's phonemic inventory is small. The consonants for North Carolina Cherokee are given in the table below. The consonants of all Iroquoian languages pattern so that they may be grouped as (oral) obstruents, sibilants, laryngeals, and resonants (Lounsbury 1978:337).

North Carolina Cherokee consonants

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Labial-velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Stop</u>		t		k	kʷ	?
<u>Affricate</u>		ts				
<u>Lateral affricate</u>		tɬ				
<u>Fricative</u>		s				h
<u>Nasal</u>	m	n				
<u>Approximant</u>		l	j	w		

Notes:

- The stops /t, k, kʷ/ and affricates /ts, tɬ/ are voiced in the beginning of syllables and between vowels: [d, g, gʷ, d̪z, d̪ɬ]. Before /h/, they surface as aspirated stops: [tʰ, kʰ, kʷʰ, tsʰ], except /tɬ/ which surfaces as a plain voiceless affricate [tɬ] or fricative [ɬ] in some Oklahoma Cherokee speakers.^{[47][48]} These aspirated allophones are felt as separate phonemes by native speakers and are often reflected as such in the orthographies (in romanization or syllabary).
- /ts/ is palatalized as [t̪s ~ t̪ʃ] (voiced allophones: [d̪z ~ d̪ʒ]) in the Oklahoma dialects,^[49] but [ts] before /h/ + obstruent after vowel deletion:^[50] *jʌ-hdlv̪ga* > *tsdlv̪ga* "you are sick".^[51]
- /tɬ/ has merged with /ts/ in most North Carolina dialects.^[47]

nu	36	ꝑ	nu
nv	37	ꝑ~	nv
qua	38	Ꝕ	qua
que	39	ꝕ	que
qui	40	ꝗ	qui
quo	41	Ꝙ~	quo
quu	42	ꝙ	quu
quv	43	Ꝛ	quv
sa	44	Ꝕ	sa
s	45	ꝕ	s
se	46	Ꝕ	se
si	47	Ꝗ	si
so	48	Ꝕ	so
su	49	ꝗ	su
sv	50	Ꝕ	sv
da	51	Ꝗ	da
ta	52	Ꝕ	ta
de	53	Ꝕ	de
te	54	Ꝕ	te
di	55	Ꝗ	di
ti	56	Ꝗ	ti
do	57	Ꝕ	do
du	58	Ꝕ	du
dv	59	Ꝙ~	dv
dla	60	Ꝙ	dla
tla	61	Ꝕ	tla
tle	62	Ꝕ	tle
tli	63	Ꝕ	tli
tlo	64	Ꝕ	tlo
tlu	65	ꝗ	tlu
tlv	66	Ꝕ	tlv
ja	67	Ꝕ	tsa
je	68	Ꝕ	tse
ji	69	Ꝕ	tsi
jo	70	Ꝕ	tso
ju	71	Ꝕ	tsu
jv	72	Ꝕ	tsv
hwa	73	Ꝕ	wa
we	74	Ꝙ	we

- [g] (the voiced allophone of /k/) can also be lenified to [χ], and [gʷ] (the voiced allophone of /kʷ/) to [χʷ ~ w].^{[52][53]}
- The sonorants /n, l, j, w/ are devoiced when preceding or following /h/, with varying degrees of allophony: [n̥, l̥ ~ l̥̥, j̥ ~ ɿ, w̥ ~ m̥ ~ ϕ].^[54]
- /m/ is the only true labial. It occurs only in a dozen of native words^[55] and is not reconstructed for Proto-Iroquoian.^[56]
- /s/ is realized as [ʃ] or even [ʂ] in North Carolina dialects. After a short vowel, /s/ is always preceded by a faint /h/, generally not spelt in the romanized orthographies.^{[54][57][58]}
- /ʔ/ and /h/, including the pre-aspiration /h/ mentioned above, participate in complex rules of laryngeal and tonal alternations, often surfacing as various tones instead. Ex: *h-vhd-a > hvhda* "use it!" but *g-vhd-iha > gvχdiha* "I am using it" with a lowfall



Tsali Boulevard in Cherokee,
North Carolina

tone;^[59] *wi-hi-gaht-i > hwikti* "you're heading there" but *wi-jí-gaht-i > wijigáati* "I am heading there" with a falling tone.^[60] North Carolina Cherokee retains more glottal stops than Oklahoma Cherokee, which shows a low fall tone instead:^{[61][62]} (NC) *suʔgi*^[63] vs. (Okl) *svv̥gi*^[64] "onion".

wi	75	Θ	wi
wo	76	Ω	wo
wu	77	ø	wu
wv	78	ɛ	wv
ya	79	ω	ya
ye	80	β	ye
yi	81	ɾ	yi
yo	82	ɦ	yo
yu	83	ɔ	yu
yv	84	ɒ	yv



A sign in Tahlequah, Oklahoma in English
and Cherokee



Oklahoma Cherokee language immersion school student writing in the Cherokee syllabary.

Orthography

There are two main competing orthographies, depending on how plain and aspirated stops (incl. affricates) are represented:^{[65][66][67]}

- In the "*d/t* system" orthography, plain stops are represented by voiced stops (*d, g, gw, j, dl*) and aspirated stops by voiceless stops (*t, k, kw, c, tl*). This orthography is favored by native speakers.
- In the "*t/th* system" orthography, plain stops are represented by voiceless stops instead, and aspirated stops by sequences of voiceless stops + *h* (*th, kh, khw/kwh, ch, tlh/tlh*). This orthography is favored by linguists as it is segmentally more accurate.



The Cherokee language taught to preschool students at New Kituwah Academy

Another orthography, used in Holmes (1977), doesn't distinguish plain stops from aspirated stops for /ts/ and /kʷ/ and uses *ts* and *qu* for both modes.^[68] Spellings working from the syllabary rather than from the sounds often behave similarly, /ts/ and /kʷ/ being the only two stops not having separate symbols for aspirated stops in any vowel. Ex: ΉΩ saquu [saàgʷu], ΙΘ quana [kʷʰana].



A lesson at New Kituwah Academy on the Qualla Boundary in North Carolina. The bilingual language immersion school, operated by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, teaches the same curriculum as other American primary schools

0:00 / 0:00

Recording of a native Cherokee speaker from the Eastern Band

0:00 / 0:00

Recording of a Cherokee language stomp dance ceremony in Oklahoma

Vowels

There are six short vowels and six long vowels in the Cherokee inventory.^[69] As with all Iroquoian languages, this includes a nasalized vowel ([Lounsbury 1978:337](#)). In the case of Cherokee, the nasalized vowel is a mid central vowel usually represented as *v* and is pronounced [ə], that is as a schwa vowel like the unstressed "a" in the English word "comma" plus the nasalization. It is similar to the nasalized vowel in the [French](#) word *un* which means "one".

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i i:		u u:
Mid	e e:	ə ə:	o o:
Open		a a:	

/u/ is weakly rounded and often realized as [w ~ ɯ].

Word-final vowels are short and nasalized, and receive an automatic high or high-falling tone: *wado* [wadõ] "thank you".^[70] They are often dropped in casual speech: *gaáda* [gaátʰ] "dirt".^[71] When deletion happens, trailing /ʔ/ and /h/ are also deleted and any resulting long vowel is further shortened:^[72] *uùgoohv́?i* > *uùgoohv́* "he saw it".

Short vowels are devoiced before /h/: *digadóhdi* [digadóhdí].^[70] But due to the phonological rules of [vowel deletion](#), [laryngeal metathesis](#) and [laryngeal alternation](#) (see below), this environment is relatively rare.

Sequences of two non-identical vowels are disallowed and the vowel clash must be resolved. There are four strategies depending on the phonological and morphological environments:^[73]

1. the first vowel is kept: *uù-aduulíha* > *uùduulíha* "he wants",
2. the second vowel is kept: *hi-ééga* > *hééga* "you're going",
3. an epenthetic consonant is inserted: *jii-uudaléé ?a* > *jiiyuudaléé ?a*,
4. they merge in a different vowel or tone quality.

These make the identification of each individual morphemes often a difficult task:

dúudaanvneelvv?
 dee-ii-uu-adaa(d)-nvvneel-vv?i
 DIST-ITER-3B-REFL-give:PERF-EXP
 "he gave them right back to him"

déenasuúléésgo
 dee-iinii-asuúléésg-o
 DIST-1A.dual-wash.hands:IMPF-HAB
 "you and I always wash our hands"

Tone

Oklahoma Cherokee distinguishes six pitch patterns or [tones](#), using four pitch levels. Two tones are level (low, high) and appear on short or long vowels. The other four are contour tones (rising, falling, lowfall, superhigh) and appear on long vowels only.^[74] Like with consonant and vowel phonemes, [minimal pairs](#) contrasting only in tones are hard to come by.^[75]

As for consonants, there is no academic consensus on the notation of tone and length. Below are the main conventions, along with the standardized [IPA](#) notation.

Vowel length	Tone	IPA	Pulte & Feeling (1975)	Scancarelli (1986)	Montgomery-Anderson (2008,2015)	Feeling (2003), Uchihara (2016)
Short	Low	˧	ə ²	à	a	a
	High	˧	ə ³	á	á	á
Long	Low	˨	a ²	à:	aa	aa
	High	˧	a ³	á:	áá	áá
	Rising	˧	a ²³	ă:	aá	aá
	Falling	˨	a ³²	â:	áà	áà
	Lowfall	˩	a ¹ (= a ²¹)	ং:	aà	àà, àa
	Superhigh	˥	a ⁴ (= a ³⁴)	ঃ:	áá	aঃ

- The **low tone** is the default, unmarked tone.
- The **high tone** is the marked tone. Some sources of high tone apply to the mora, others to the syllable. Complex morphophonological rules govern whether it can spread one mora to the left, to the right or at all. It has both lexical and morphological functions.
- The **rising and falling tones** are secondary tones, i.e. combinations of low and high tones, deriving from moraic high tones and from high tone spread.
- The **lowfall tone** mainly derives from glottal stop deletion after a long vowel, but also has important morphological functions (pronominal lowering, tonic/ataonic alternation, laryngeal alternation).
- The **superhigh tone**, also called "highfall" by Montgomery-Anderson, has a distinctive morphosyntactical function, primarily appearing on adjectives, nouns derived from verbs, and on subordinate verbs. It is mobile and fall on the rightmost long vowel. If the final short vowel is dropped and the superhigh tone becomes in word-final position, it is shortened and pronounced like a slightly higher final tone (notated as ঃ in most orthographies). There can only be one superhigh tone per word, constraint not shared by the other tones. For these reasons, this contour exhibits some accentual properties and has been referred to as an "accent" (or stress) in the literature.^[76]

North Carolina Cherokee exhibits less tonal features and retains more archaic traits like glottal stops. It is often used to assert hypotheses on tonogenesis in Oklahoma Cherokee.

While the tonal system is undergoing a gradual simplification in many areas, it remains important in meaning and is still held strongly by many, especially older, speakers. The syllabary displays neither tone nor vowel length, but as stated earlier regarding the paucity of minimal pairs, real cases of ambiguity are rare. The same goes for transliterated Cherokee (*osiyo* for [oosíyo], *dohitsu* for [tʰoohiʃju] etc.), which is rarely written with any tone markers, except in dictionaries. Native speakers can tell the difference between written words based solely on context.

Phonological and morphophonological processes

Vowel deletion

Laryngeal alternation

H-metathesis

Pronominal lowering

Tonicity

Grammar

Cherokee, like many Native American languages, is polysynthetic, meaning that many morphemes may be linked together to form a single word, which may be of great length. Cherokee verbs, the most important word type, must contain as a minimum a pronominal prefix, a verb root, an aspect suffix, and a modal suffix.^[20] For example, the verb form **ge:ga**, "I am going," has each of these elements:

Verb form **I-S ge:ga**

I		S	
g-	e:	-g	-a
PRONOMINAL PREFIX	VERB ROOT "to go"	ASPECT SUFFIX	MODAL SUFFIX

The pronominal prefix is *g-*, which indicates first person singular. The verb root is *-e*, "to go." The aspect suffix that this verb employs for the present-tense stem is *-g-*. The present-tense modal suffix for regular verbs in Cherokee is *-a*.

Cherokee has 17 verb tenses and 10 persons.^[38]

The following is a conjugation in the present tense of the verb to go.^[77] Please note that there is no distinction between dual and plural in the 3rd person.

Full conjugation of Progressive Root Verb-e- "going"

Person	Singular	Dual Inc.	Dual Exc.	Plural Inc.	Plural Exc.
1st	I-S gega I'm going	TΛS inega You & I are going	တଳସଙ୍ଗ osdega We two (not you) are going	TSS idega We're (& you) all going	ଡଳସ otsega We're (not you) all going
2nd	P-S hega You're going		ଦେଲସ sdega You two are going		TIVS itsega You're all going
3rd	RS ega She/he/it's going			DΛS anega They are going	

The translation uses the present progressive ("at this time I am going"). Cherokee differentiates between progressive ("I am going") and habitual ("I go") more than English does.

Full conjugation of Habitual Root Verb-e- "often/usually go"

Person	Singular	Dual Inc.	Dual Exc.	Plural Inc.	Plural Exc.
1st	I-AT gegoi I often/usually go	TΛAT inegoi You & I often/usually go	ତଳସାତ osdegoi We two (not you) often/usually go	TSAT idegoi We (& you) often/usually go	ଡଳସାତ otsegoi We (not you) often/usually go
2nd	P-AT hegoi You often/usually go		ଦେଲସାତ sdegoi You two often/usually go		TIV-AT itsegoi You often/usually go
3rd	R-AT egoi She/he/it often/usually goes			DΛAT anegoi They often/usually go	

The forms I-AT, P-AT, R-AT **gegoi**, **hegoi**, **egoi** represent "I often/usually go", "you often/usually go", and "she/he/it often/usually goes", respectively.^[77]

Verbs can also have prepronominal prefixes, reflexive prefixes, and derivative suffixes. Given all possible combinations of affixes, each regular verb can have 21,262 inflected forms.

Cherokee does not make gender distinctions. For example, *S^Qhɔv gawoniha* can mean either "she is speaking" or "he is speaking."^[78]

Pronouns and pronominal prefixes

Like many Native American languages, Cherokee has many pronominal prefixes that can index both subject and object. Pronominal prefixes always appear on verbs and can also appear on adjectives and nouns.^[79] There are two separate words which function as pronouns: *aya* "I, me" and *nihu* "you".

Table of Cherokee first person pronominal prefixes

Number	Set I	Set II
Singular	<i>ji-</i> , <i>g-</i>	<i>agi-</i> , <i>agw-</i>
Dual inclusive	<i>ini-</i> , <i>in-</i>	<i>gini-</i> , <i>gin-</i>
Dual exclusive	<i>osdi-</i> , <i>osd-</i>	<i>ogini-</i> , <i>ogin-</i>
Plural inclusive	<i>idi-</i> , <i>id-</i>	<i>igi-</i> , <i>ig-</i>
Plural exclusive	<i>oji-</i> , <i>oj-</i>	<i>ogi-</i> , <i>og-</i>

Shape classifiers in verbs

Some Cherokee verbs require special classifiers which denote a physical property of the direct object. Only around 20 common verbs require one of these classifiers (such as the equivalents of "pick up", "put down", "remove", "wash", "hide", "eat", "drag", "have", "hold", "put in water", "put in fire", "hang up", "be placed", "pull along"). The classifiers can be grouped into five categories:

- Live
- Flexible (most common)
- Long (narrow, not flexible)
- Indefinite (solid, heavy relative to size), also used as default category^[80]
- Liquid (or container of)

Example:

Conjugation of "Hand him ..."

Classifier Type	Cherokee	Transliteration	Translation
Live	Ꭿଡ୍ସ	<i>hikasi</i>	Hand him (something living)
Flexible	Ꭿଓଁ	<i>hinysi</i>	Hand him (something like clothes, rope)
Long, Indefinite	Ꭿଳ୍ସ	<i>hidisi</i>	Hand him (something like a broom, pencil)
Indefinite	ହିସ୍	<i>hivsi</i>	Hand him (something like food, book)
Liquid	ହିଲ୍ସି	<i>hineysi</i>	Hand him (something like water)

There have been reports that the youngest speakers of Cherokee are using only the indefinite forms, suggesting a decline in usage or full acquisition of the system of shape classification.^[81] Cherokee is the only Iroquoian language with this type of classificatory verb system, leading linguists to reanalyze it as a potential remnant of a noun incorporation system in Proto-Iroquoian.^[82] However, given the non-productive nature of noun incorporation in Cherokee, other linguists have suggested that classificatory verbs are the product of historical contact between Cherokee and non-Iroquoian languages, and instead that the noun incorporation system in Northern Iroquoian languages developed later.^[83]

Word order

Simple declarative sentences usually have a subject-object-verb word order.^[84] Negative sentences have a different word order. Adjectives come before nouns, as in English. Demonstratives, such as Θ&Y *nasgi* ("that") or &D *hia* ("this"), come at the beginning of noun phrases. Relative clauses follow noun phrases.^[85] Adverbs precede the verbs that they are modifying. For example, "she's speaking loudly" is D&lsq; S&lh&v *asdaya gawoniha* (literally, "loud she's-speaking").^[85]

A Cherokee sentence may not have a verb as when two noun phrases form a sentence. In such a case, word order is flexible. For example, Θ D&lsq;S&w D&vbl; *na asgaya agidoda* ("that man is my father"). A noun phrase might be followed by an adjective, such as in D&vbl; O&wθ *agidoga utana* ("my father is big").^[86]

Orthography

Cherokee is written in an 85-character syllabary invented by Sequoyah (also known as Guest or George Gist). Many of the letters resemble the Latin letters they derive from, but have completely unrelated sound values; Sequoyah had seen English, Hebrew, and Greek writing but did not know how to read them.^[87]

Two other scripts used to write Cherokee are a simple Latin transliteration and a more precise system with diacritical marks.^[88]

Description

Each of the characters represents one syllable, as in the Japanese kana and the Bronze Age Greek Linear B writing systems. The first six characters represent isolated vowel syllables. Characters for combined consonant and vowel syllables then follow. It is recited from left to right, top to bottom.^[89]

The charts below show the syllabary as arranged by Samuel Worcester along with his commonly used transliterations. He played a key role in the development of Cherokee printing from 1828 until his death in 1859.



Sequoyah, inventor of the Cherokee syllabary

a	e	i	o	u	v [ə]
D a	R e	T i	ɔ o	O' u	i v
Ş ga ḡ ka	F ge	Y gi	A go	J gu	E gv
oV ha	P he	ɬ hi	F ho	Γ hu	& hv
W la	d le	P li	G lo	M lu	ɻ lv
đ ma	Ol me	H mi	ɔ mo	Y mu	
Θ na t̪ hna G nah	ʌ ne	h ni	Z no	ɻ nu	ɒ nv
I qua	ɔ que	ɸ qui	V quo	ɔ̄ quu	ɛ quv
óD s E sa	4 se	b si	F so	ɸ su	R sv
l̪ da W ta	S de ɬ te	ɬ di ɬ ti	V do	S du	ð̄ dv
ɬ̄ dla L̄ tla	L tle	C tli	ɬ̄ tlo	ɸ̄ tlu	P tlv
Ḡ tsa	V̄ tse	Ir̄ tsi	K̄ tso	D̄ tsu	C̄ tsv
Ḡ wa	ɬ̄ we	Θ̄ wi	Ō wo	9̄ wu	6̄ wv
ɬ̄ ya	β̄ ye	ɬ̄ yi	h̄ yo	Ḡ yu	B̄ yv

Notes:

1. In the chart, 'v' represents a nasal vowel, /ə/.
2. The character V do is shown upside-down in some fonts. It should be oriented in the same way as the Latin letter V.^[b]

The transliteration working from the syllabary uses conventional consonants like *qu, ts, ...,* and may differ from the ones used in the phonological orthographies (first column in the below chart, in the "d/t system").

Ø	D a	R e	T i	ð o	Oº u	i v
g / k	§ ga ʘ ka	ꝑ ge	ꝑ gi	A go	J gu	E gv
h	oꝑ ha	ꝑ he	ꝑ hi	ꝑ ho	ꝑ hu	ꝑ hv
l / hl	W la	ꝑ le	ꝑ li	ꝑ lo	M lu	ꝑ lv
m	ጀ ma	ꝑ me	ꝑ mi	ጀ mo	ꝑ mu	
n / hn	Θ na tꝑ hna G nah	ꝑ ne	ꝑ ni	Z no	ꝑ nu	O~ nv
gw / kw	ꝑ qua	ꝑ que	ꝑ qui	ꝑ quo	ꝑ quu	ꝑ quv
s	ጀ s ꝑ sa	ꝑ se	ጀ si	ጀ so	ꝑ su	R sv
d / t	ጀ da W ta	ꝑ de tꝑ te	ጀ di tꝑ ti	V do	S du	ꝑ dv
dl / tl (hl)	ጀ dla L tla	ꝑ tle	ꝑ tli	ꝑ tlo	ꝑ tlu	P tlv
j / c (dz / ts)	ꝑ tsa	ꝑ tse	ꝑ tsi	K tso	ꝑ tsu	C tsv
w / hw	ꝑ wa	ꝑ we	ꝑ wi	ꝑ wo	ꝑ wu	ꝑ ww
y / hy	ጀ ya	ꝑ ye	ጀ yi	ጀ yo	ꝑ yu	B yv

The phonetic values of these characters do not equate directly to those represented by the letters of the Latin script. Some characters represent two distinct phonetic values (actually heard as different syllables), while others often represent different forms of the same syllable.^[89] Not all phonemic distinctions of the spoken language are represented:

- Aspirated consonants are generally not distinguished from their plain counterpart. For example, while /d/ + vowel syllables are mostly differentiated from /t/ + vowel by use of different glyphs, syllables beginning with /gw/ are all conflated with those beginning with /kw/.
- Long vowels are not distinguished from short vowels. However, in more recent technical literature, length of vowels can actually be indicated using a colon, and other disambiguation methods for consonants (somewhat like the Japanese dakuten) have been suggested.
- Tones are not marked.
- Syllables ending in vowels, h, or glottal stop are differentiated. For example, the single symbol ꝑ is used to represent both *suú* as in *suúdáli*, meaning "six" (ጀꝑꝑꝑ), and *súh* as in *súhdi*, meaning "fishhook" (ጀꝑ).
- There is no regular rule for representing consonant clusters. When consonants other than s, h, or glottal stop arise in clusters with other consonants, a vowel must be inserted, chosen either arbitrarily or for etymological reasons (reflecting an underlying etymological vowel, see vowel deletion for instance). For example, ꝑθጀꝑ (tsu-na-s-di) represents the word *juunsdí*, meaning "small (pl.), babies". The consonant cluster *ns* is broken down by insertion of the vowel *a*, and is spelt as Θጀꝑ /nas/. The vowel is etymological as *juunsdí* is composed of the morphemes *di-uunii-asdií?* (DIST-3B.pl-small), where *a* is part of the root. The vowel is included in the transliteration, but is not pronounced.

As with some other underspecified writing systems (like Arabic), adult speakers can distinguish words by context.

Transliteration issues

Some Cherokee words pose a problem for transliteration software because they contain adjacent pairs of single letter symbols that (without special provisions) would be combined when doing the back conversion from Latin script to Cherokee. Here are a few examples:

- T^GP^oD^UL = *itsalisanedi* = *i-tsa-li-s-a-ne-di*
- O^gP^YG^oD^O~^U = *uligiyusanvne* = *u-li-gi-yu-s-a-nv-ne*
- O^gH^bT^o = *uniyesiyi* = *u-ni-ye-s-i-yi*
- Θ^aT^a = *nasiya* = *na-s-i-ya*

For these examples, the back conversion is likely to join *s-a* as *sa* or *s-i* as *si*. Transliterations sometimes insert an apostrophe to prevent this, producing *itsali'sanedi* (cf. *Man'yoshu*).

Other Cherokee words contain character pairs that entail overlapping transliteration sequences. Examples:

- G^θ transliterates as *nahna*, yet so does Θ^t. The former is *nah-na*, the latter is *na-hna*.

If the Latin script is parsed from left to right, longest match first, then without special provisions, the back conversion would be wrong for the latter. There are several similar examples involving these character combinations: *naha nahe nahi naho nahu nahv*.

A further problem encountered in transliterating Cherokee is that there are some pairs of different Cherokee words that transliterate to the same word in the Latin script. Here are some examples:

- D^oRZ and D4Z both transliterate to *aseno*
- F^oiT and FRT both transliterate to *gesvi*

Without special provision, a round trip conversion changes D^oRZ to D4Z and changes F^oiT to FRT.^[c]

Unicode

Cherokee was added to the [Unicode](#) Standard in September, 1999 with the release of version 3.0.

Blocks

The main Unicode block for Cherokee is U+13A0–U+13FF.^[d] It contains the script's upper-case syllables as well as six lower-case syllables.

Cherokee ^{[1][2]}																
Official Unicode Consortium code chart (https://www.unicode.org/charts/PDF/U13A0.pdf) (PDF)																
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
U+13Ax	D	R	T	ঠ	ঠ	i	ঙ	ঠ	ঞ	ঘ	ঘ	ঘ	ঘ	ঘ	ঘ	ঘ
U+13Bx	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ
U+13Cx	G	ঞ	ঞ	Z	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ	ঞ
U+13Dx	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ
U+13Ex	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ
U+13Fx	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ	ঁ

Notes

1.^ As of Unicode version 13.0

2.^ Grey areas indicate non-assigned code points

The rest of the lower-case syllables are encoded at U+AB70–ABBF.

Cherokee Supplement ^[1]																
Official Unicode Consortium code chart (https://www.unicode.org/charts/PDF/UAB70.pdf) (PDF)																
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	A	B	C	D	E	F
U+AB7x	D	R	T	ঁ	O ^o	i	s	ঁ	r	y	a	j	e	ঁৰ	p	ঁ
U+AB8x	f	ଁ	ଁ	w	ୟ	ଁ	ଁ	m	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ୟ	ଁ	t
U+AB9x	g	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	b
U+ABAx	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	c
U+ABBx	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ	ଁ

Notes

1.^ As of Unicode version 13.0

Fonts and digital platform support

A single Cherokee Unicode font, Plantagenet Cherokee, is supplied with macOS, version 10.3 (Panther) and later. Windows Vista also includes a Cherokee font. Several free Cherokee fonts are available including Digohweli, Donisiladv, and Noto Sans Cherokee. Some pan-Unicode fonts, such as Code2000, Everson Mono, and GNU FreeFont, include Cherokee characters. A commercial font, Phoreus Cherokee, published by TypeCulture, includes multiple weights and styles.^[91] The Cherokee Nation Language Technology Program supports "innovative solutions for the Cherokee language on all digital platforms including smartphones, laptops, desktops, tablets and social networks."^[92]

Vocabulary

Numbers

Cherokee uses Arabic numerals (0–9). The Cherokee council voted not to adopt Sequoyah's numbering system.^[93] Sequoyah created individual symbols for 1–20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100 as well as a symbol for three zeros for numbers in the thousands, and a symbol for six zeros for numbers in the millions. These last two symbols, representing ",000" and ",000,000", are made up of two separate symbols each. They have a symbol in common, which could be used as a zero in itself.



Cherokee stop sign,
Tahlequah, Oklahoma,
with "alehwisdiha" (also
spelled "halehwisda")
meaning "stop"

English	Cherokee ^[94]	Transliteration
one	Ꭰ	saquu
two	Ꭷ	tali
three	KT	tsoi
four	O~Y	nvgi
five	Ꭿ	hisgi
six	Ꮝ	sudali
seven	Ꮻ	galiquogi
eight	Ꮗ	tsunela
nine	Ꮕ	sonela
ten	Ꮜ	sgohi
eleven	Ꮛ	sadu
twelve	Ꭷ	talidu
thirteen	KSS	tsogadu
fourteen	hSS	nigadu
fifteen	ᎯSS	hisgadu
sixteen	WS	daladu
seventeen	SPIS	galiquadu
eighteen	WS	neladu
nineteen	hWS	soneladu
twenty	WPAJ	talisgohi



Cherokee traffic sign in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, reading "tla adi yigi", meaning "no parking" from "tla" meaning "no"

Days

English	Cherokee ^{[94][95]}	Transliteration
Days of the Week	Ꭿ	hilvsgiiga
Sunday	O~θVTS	unadodaquasgv
Monday	O~θVTS~O~	unadodaquohnvhi
Tuesday	WPTTS	talineiga
Wednesday	KTPTS	tsoineiga
Thursday	O~YPTS	nvgameiga
Friday	JPPTS	junagilosdi
Saturday	O~θVTSΘ	unadodaquidena

Months

English	Meaning	Cherokee	Transliteration
January	Month of the Cold Moon	SZ ^Q W ^H	dunolvtni
February	Month of the Bony Moon	Ø ^{SH} R	kagali
March	Month of the Windy Moon	D ^Q ñ	anuyi
April	Month of the Flower Moon	ØG ^h	kawani
May	Month of the Planting Moon	DØDE ^J	anaagvti
June	Month of the Green Corn Moon	S ^Q IM ^ñ	dehaluyi
July	Month of the Ripe Corn Moon	J ^Q V ^ñ H	guyequoni
August	Month of the End of Fruit Moon	S ^Q H ^T	galonii
September	Month of the Nut Moon	SPT ^Q XL	duliisdi
October	Month of the Harvest Moon	ShO ^ñ L	duninvdi
November	Month of Trading Moon	Q ^Q ST ^J	nudadequa
December	Month of the Snow Moon	i ^Q SY ^S	vsgiga

Colors

English	Cherokee	Transliteration
black	EΘI ^T	gvnagei
blue	HAhI ^T	sagonigei
brown	O ^Q W ^I	uwodige
green	T ^Q TG ^Q XL	itseiyusdi
gray	O ^Q ñA ^Q HAhI ^T	usgolv sagonige
gold	Ł ^Q hI ^T	dalonigei
orange	D ^Q GhI ^T	asalonige
pink	Y ^Q I ^T G ^Q XL	gigageiyusdi
purple	Y ^Q I ^Q XL	gigesdi
red	Y ^Q I ^T	gigage
silver	DS ^Q O ^Q ñE	adelv unegv
white	O ^Q ñS	unega
yellow	Ł ^Q hI ^T	dalonige

Word creation

The polysynthetic nature of the Cherokee language enables the language to develop new descriptive words in Cherokee to reflect or express new concepts. Some good examples are *Ł^QñH^QA^Q* (*ditiyohihi*, "he argues repeatedly and on purpose with a purpose") corresponding to "attorney" and *Ł^QñH^QñU* (*didaniyisgi*, "the final catcher" or "he catches them finally and conclusively") for "policeman."^[96]

Other words have been adopted from another language such as the English word *gasoline*, which in Cherokee is *S^QP^Q* (*gasoline*). Other words were adopted from the languages of tribes who settled in Oklahoma in the early 1900s. One interesting and humorous example is the name of Nowata, Oklahoma deriving from *nowata*, a Delaware word for "welcome" (more precisely the Delaware word is *nuwita* which can mean "welcome" or "friend" in the Delaware

languages). The white settlers of the area used the name *nowata* for the township, and local Cherokee, being unaware that the word had its origins in the Delaware language, called the town D^čŁ^čΘhEΘEΘ (*Amadikanigvnagvna*) which means "the water is all gone gone from here" – i.e. "no water."^[97]

Other examples of adopted words are ᏃTheta (kawi) for "coffee" and G^čIr (watsi) for "watch"; which led to O^čW^č G^čIr (*utana watsi*, "big watch") for *clock*.^[97]

Meaning expansion can be illustrated by the words for "warm" and "cold", which can be also extended to mean "south" and "north". Around the time of the American Civil War, they were further extended to US party labels, Democratic and Republican, respectively.^[98]

Samples

From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Cherokee	Translation	Syllabary
<i>Nigada aniyywi nigeguda'lwna ale unihloyi unadehna duyukdv gesv'i. Gejinela unadanvtehdi ale unohlisdi ale sagwu gesv junilvwisdanedi anahldinvdlv adanvdo gvhdii.</i>	All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.	h _Ş D _h B _Θ h _Ł J _ł q _θ D _θ O _h G _č O _θ ST _č SG _θ ℳ _θ I _{RT} . I _{Ir} ɬW O _θ SO~T _č D _θ O _θ ZR _θ ɬJ _θ D _θ ɬ _θ I _R J _h q _θ o _θ ɬI _θ D _θ CO~P D _θ O~V E _θ .

Notes

- a. Ethnologue classifies Cherokee as moribund (8a), which means that "The only remaining active users of the language are members of the grandparent generation and older".^[11]
- b. There was a difference between the old-form DO (Λ-like) and a new-form DO (V-like). The standard Digohweli font displays the new-form. Old Do Digohweli and Code2000 fonts both display the old-form^[90]
- c. This has been confirmed using the online transliteration service.
- d. The PDF Unicode chart shows the new-form of the letter *do*.

References

1. Neely, Charlotte (March 15, 2011). *Snowbird Cherokees: People of Persistence* (https://books.google.com/books?id=rpbSb5Psi_SC&dq=cherokee+language+speakers). University of Georgia Press. pp. 147–148. ISBN 9780820340746. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
2. Frey, Ben (2005). "A Look at the Cherokee Language" (<https://wayback.archive-it.org/all/20130607161025/http://www.ncdcr.gov/Portals/7/Collateral/Database/F05.Cherokee.language.pdf>) (PDF). *Tar Heel Junior Historian*. North Carolina Museum of History. Archived from the original (<http://www.ncdcr.gov/Portals/7/Collateral/Database/F05.Cherokee.language.pdf>) (PDF) on 2013-06-07. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
3. "Cherokee" (<http://www.endangeredlanguages.com/lang/chr>). Endangered Languages Project. Retrieved April 9, 2014.
4. "Cherokee: A Language of the United States" (<http://www.ethnologue.com/language/chr>). Ethnologue. SIL International. 2018. Retrieved May 16, 2019.
5. McKie, Scott (June 27, 2019). "Tri-Council declares State of Emergency for Cherokee language" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190629081731/https://www.theonefeather.com/2019/06/tri-council-declares-state-of-emergency-for-cherokee-language/>). *Cherokee One Feather*. Archived from the original (<https://www.theonefeather.com/2019/06/tri-council-declares-state-of-emergency-for-cherokee-language/>) on June 29, 2019. Retrieved July 2, 2019.
6. "The Cherokee Nation & its Language" (https://carla.umn.edu/conferences/past/immersion2008/documents/Peter_L_CherokeeNation.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiuspfs4eDnAhVLIKwKHaD9C1sQFjAAegQIAhAB&usg=AOvVaw0RXKbAsSg0cAZN2RJwxMzs). University of Minnesota: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. 2008. Retrieved Feb 20, 2020.

7. "Keetoowah Cherokee is the Official Language of the UKB" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140715002414/http://keetoowahcherokee.org/documents/GaduwaCherokeeNews/2009-04%20April.pdf>) (PDF). keetoowahcherokee.org/. Keetoowah Cherokee News: Official Publication of the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma. April 2009. Archived from the original (<http://keetoowahcherokee.org/documents/GaduwaCherokeeNews/2009-04%20April.pdf>) (PDF) on July 15, 2014. Retrieved June 1, 2014.
8. "Language & Culture" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140425060256/http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/about-ukb/language>). [keetoowahcherokee.org/](http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/). United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians. Archived from the original (<http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/about-ukb/language>) on April 25, 2014. Retrieved June 1, 2014.
9. "UKB Constitution and By-Laws in the Keetoowah Cherokee Language" (https://web.archive.org/web/20160201132858/http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/documents/dikahnawadvsi_ditsaleg.pdf) (PDF). United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians. Archived from the original (http://www.keetoowahcherokee.org/documents/dikahnawadvsi_ditsaleg.pdf) (PDF) on February 1, 2016. Retrieved June 2, 2014.
10. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Cherokee" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/cher1273>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
11. "Language Status" (<https://www.ethnologue.com/about/language-status>). *Ethnologue*. SIL International. 2019. Retrieved May 30, 2019.
12. Ridge, Betty (Apr 11, 2019). "Cherokees strive to save a dying language" (https://www.tahlequahdailypress.com/news/tribal_news/cherokees-strive-to-save-a-dying-language/article_c944efa0-2847-5688-a113-969768259f1b.html). *Tahlequah Daily Press*. Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20190412170056/https://www.tahlequahdailypress.com/news/tribal_news/cherokees-strive-to-save-a-dying-language/article_c944efa0-2847-5688-a113-969768259f1b.html) from the original on April 12, 2019. Retrieved May 9, 2019.
13. "UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in danger" (<http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php?hl=en&page=atlasmap&cc2=US>). www.unesco.org. Retrieved 2017-12-17.
14. Scancarelli, Janine; Hardy, Heather Kay (2005-01-01). *Native Languages of the Southeastern United States* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=nd5o9juMePEC&pg=PA351&lpg=PA352#v=onepage>). U of Nebraska Press. ISBN 0803242352.
15. Schlemmer, Liz (October 28, 2018). "North Carolina Cherokee Say The Race To Save Their Language Is A Marathon" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190514152003/https://www.wunc.org/post/north-carolina-cherokee-say-race-save-their-language-marathon>). *North Carolina Public Radio*. Archived from the original (<https://www.wunc.org/post/north-carolina-cherokee-say-race-save-their-language-marathon>) on May 14, 2019. Retrieved May 14, 2019.
16. Overall, Michael (Feb 7, 2018). "As first students graduate, Cherokee immersion program faces critical test: Will the language survive?" (https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/as-first-students-graduate-cherokee-immersion-program-faces-critical-test/article_bcdc2a5f-43fd-547f-bb1a-278ec24aa0c1.html). *Tulsa World*. Archived (https://web.archive.org/web/20190514155749/https://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/as-first-students-graduate-cherokee-immersion-program-faces-critical-test/article_bcdc2a5f-43fd-547f-bb1a-278ec24aa0c1.html) from the original on May 14, 2019. Retrieved May 14, 2019.
17. Montgomery-Anderson, Brad (June 2008). "Citing Verbs in Polysynthetic Languages: The Case of the Cherokee-English Dictionary" (<https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-200778805/citing-verbs-in-polysynthetic-languages-the-case>). *Southwest Journal of Linguistics*. 27. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
18. Feeling, "Dictionary," p. viii
19. "Cherokee Syllabary" (<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/cherokee.htm>). *Omniglot*. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
20. Feeling et al., "Verb" p. 16
21. "Native Languages of the Americas: Cherokee (Tsalagi)" (<http://www.native-languages.org/cherokee.htm>). *Native Languages of the Americas*. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
22. "Cherokee: A Language of the United States" (<http://www.ethnologue.com/language/chr>). *Ethnologue*. SIL International. 2013. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
23. LeBeau, Patrik. *Term Paper Resource Guide to American Indian History*. Greenwood. Westport, CT: 2009. p132.
24. Woods, Thomas E. *Exploring American History: Penn, William – Serra, Junípero Cavendish*. Tarrytown, NY: 2008. p829.
25. Cushman, Ellen (2011). ""We're Taking the Genius of Sequoyah into This Century": The Cherokee Syllabary, Peoplehood, and Perseverance". *Wicazo Sa Review*. University of Minnesota Press. 26 (1): 72–75. doi:10.5749/wicazosareview.26.1.0067 (<https://doi.org/10.5749%2Fwicazosareview.26.1.0067>). JSTOR 10.5749/wicazosareview.26.1.0067 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/wicazosareview.26.1.0067>).
26. Sturtevant & Fogelson 2004, p. 337.
27. Wilford, John Noble (June 22, 2009). "Carvings From Cherokee Script's Dawn" (<https://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/23/science/23cherokee.html?ref=science>). *New York Times*. Retrieved June 23, 2009.

28. G. C. (August 13, 1820). "Invention of the Cherokee Alphabet". *Cherokee Phoenix*. 1 (24).
29. Boudinot, Elias (April 1, 1832). "Invention of a New Alphabet". *American Annals of Education*.
30. Davis, John B. *Chronicles of Oklahoma*. Vol. 8, Number 2. "The Life and Work of Sequoyah." June 1930. Retrieved April 4, 2013.[1] (<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/chronicles/v008/v008p149.html>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20171028175529/http://digital.library.okstate.edu/chronicles/v008/v008p149.html>) 2017-10-28 at the Wayback Machine
31. Langguth, p. 71
32. "Sequoyah" (<http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-618&sug=y>), *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, accessed January 3, 2009
33. "Cherokee language" (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/109503/Cherokee-language>). *www.britannica.com*. Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
34. "Cherokee: A Language of the United States" (https://web.archive.org/web/20140714194741/http://archive.ethnologue.com/16/show_language.asp?code=chr). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*. SIL International. 2009. Archived from the original (http://archive.ethnologue.com/16/show_language.asp?code=chr) on 2014-07-14. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
35. "Cherokee Language & Culture" (<https://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/challenges/cherokee.html>). *Indian Country Diaries*. pbs. Retrieved June 1, 2014.
36. Scancarelli, "Native Languages" p. 351
37. Thompson, Irene (August 6, 2013). "Cherokee" (<http://aboutworldlanguages.com/cherokee>). *aboutworldlanguages.com*. Retrieved May 22, 2014.
38. Neal, Dale (January 4, 2016). "Cracking the code to speak Cherokee" (<http://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2016/01/03/cracking-code-speak-cherokee/77744120/>). *Asheville Citizen-Times*.
39. Cushman, Ellen (September 13, 2012). *The Cherokee Syllabary: Writing the People's Perseverance* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=JiN-P2aNrnoC&pg=PA188&lpg=PA188&dq=Established+cherokee+and+english+as+the+official+languages+of+the+tribe#+v=onepage>). Chapter 8 – Peoplehood and Perseverance: The Cherokee Language, 1980–2010: University of Oklahoma Press. pp. 189–191. ISBN 9780806185484. Retrieved June 2, 2014.
40. "Health Centers & Hospitals" (<http://www.cherokee.org/Services/Health/HealthCentersHospitals.aspx>). Cherokee Nation. Retrieved June 5, 2014.
41. "Native Now : Language: Cherokee" (https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/native_now/language_cherokee). *We Shall Remain – American Experience – PBS*. 2008. Retrieved April 9, 2014.
42. "Cherokee Language Revitalization" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140407070520/http://www.cherokeepreservationfdn.org/cultural-preservation-connect/major-programs-and-initiatives/cherokee-language-revitalization>). *Cherokee Preservation Foundation*. 2014. Archived from the original (<http://www.cherokeepreservationfdn.org/cultural-preservation-connect/major-programs-and-initiatives/cherokee-language-revitalization>) on April 7, 2014. Retrieved April 9, 2014.
43. Kituwah Preservation & Education Program Powerpoint, by Renissa Walker (2012). 2012. Print.
44. Chavez, Will (April 5, 2012). "Immersion students win trophies at language fair" (<http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/Article/Index/6142>). *Cherokeephoenix.org*. Retrieved April 8, 2013.
45. "Cherokee Language Revitalization Project" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140407084751/http://www.wcu.edu/academics/departments-schools-colleges/cas/casdepts/anthsoc/cherokee-studies/cherokeelanguagerevitalizationproject.asp>). *Western Carolina University*. 2014. Archived from the original (<http://www.wcu.edu/academics/departments-schools-colleges/cas/casdepts/anthsoc/cherokee-studies/cherokeelanguagerevitalizationproject.asp>) on April 7, 2014. Retrieved April 9, 2014.
46. King, Duane Harold (1975). *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Cherokee Language*. pp. 16, 21.
47. Uchihara, 2016, p. 41.
48. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, pp. 39 and 64.
49. Uchihara, 2015, pp. 40-41.
50. Scancarelli, 1987, p.25.
51. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 65.
52. Uchihara, 2016, p. 39.
53. Scancarelli, 1987, p. 26.
54. Uchihara, 2016, p. 42.
55. Uchihara, 2016, p. 43
56. Charles, 2010, pp. 21 and 82.
57. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 36.
58. Scancarelli, 1987, p. 25.

59. Uchihara, 2016, p. 43.
60. Montgomery-Anderson, 2015, p. 219.
61. Uchihara, 2016, p. 102.
62. Montgomery-Anderson, 2015, p. 224.
63. King, 1975, p. 204.
64. Feeling, 1975, p. 155.
65. Uchihara, 2016, p. 11
66. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, pp. 33 and 64.
67. Scancarelli, 2005, pp. 359-362.
68. Scancarelli, 1987, p. 30
69. Feeling, "Dictionary," p. ix
70. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 45.
71. Uchihara, 2016, p. 49.
72. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 78.
73. Uchihara, 2013, pp. 127-130.
74. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 51
75. Uchihara, 2016, p. 86
76. Uchihara, 2016, p. 95
77. Robinson, "Conjugation" p. 60
78. Feeling, "Dictionary" xiii
79. Montgomery-Anderson, 2008, p. 49
80. King, Duane (1975). *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Cherokee Language*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia.
81. Scancarelli, Janine; Hardy, Heather Kay (2005-01-01). *Native Languages of the Southeastern United States* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=nd5o9juMePEC&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=scancarelli+2005#v=onepage>). U of Nebraska Press. ISBN 0803242352.
82. Mithun, Marianne (1984). "The Evolution of Noun Incorporation". *Language*. **60** (4): 847–894. doi:[10.1353/lan.1984.0038](https://doi.org/10.1353/lan.1984.0038) (<https://doi.org/10.1353%2Flan.1984.0038>).
83. Chafe, Wallace. 2000. "Florescence as a force in grammaticalization." *Reconstructing Grammar*, ed. Spike Gildea, pp. 39–64. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
84. Holmes, Ruth (1977) [1976]. "Cherokee Lesson 23" (<https://archive.org/details/beginningcheroke0000holm/page/209>). *Beginning Cherokee*. University of Oklahoma Press:Norman. p. 209 (<https://archive.org/details/beginningcheroke0000holm/page/209>). ISBN 978-0-8061-1463-7.
85. Feeling, "Dictionary" p. 353
86. Feeling, "Dictionary" p. 354
87. Feeling, "Dictionary" xvii
88. Feeling et al., "Verb" pp. 1–2
89. Walker & Sarbaugh 1993.
90. "Cherokee". [download](http://www.languagegeek.com/font/fontdownload.html#Cherokee) (<http://www.languagegeek.com/font/fontdownload.html#Cherokee>). LanguageGeek.com.
91. "Phoreus Cherokee" (<http://typeculture.com/foundry/font-collection/phoreus-cherokee/>). TypeCulture. Retrieved 15 January 2018.
92. Avila, Eduardo (September 13, 2015). "How the Cherokee language has adapted to texts, iPhones" (<http://www.pri.org/stories/2015-09-13/how-cherokee-language-has-adapted-texts-iphones>). Public Radio International, Digital Voices Online. Retrieved 2015-10-03.
93. "Numerals", Cherokee (<https://web.archive.org/web/20111102075444/http://intertribal.net/NAT/Cherokee/WebPgCC1/Numerals.htm>), Inter tribal, archived from the original (<http://intertribal.net/NAT/Cherokee/WebPgCC1/Numerals.htm>) on November 2, 2011
94. "Numbers in Cherokee" (<http://www.omniglot.com/language/numbers/cherokee.htm>). omniglot.com. Retrieved May 18, 2015.
95. "Dikaneisdi (Word List)" ([https://web.archive.org/web/20150508224207/http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Language/Dikaneisdi\(WordList\).aspx](https://web.archive.org/web/20150508224207/http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Language/Dikaneisdi(WordList).aspx)). cherokee.org. Archived from the original (<http://www.cherokee.org/AboutTheNation/Language/Dikaneisdi%28WordList%29.aspx>) on May 8, 2015. Retrieved May 18, 2015.
96. Holmes and Smith, p. vi
97. Holmes and Smith, p. vii

Bibliography

- Feeling, Durbin. *Cherokee-English Dictionary: Tsalagi-Yonega Didehlogwasdohdi*. Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Cherokee Nation, 1975.
- Feeling, Durbin, Craig Kopris, Jordan Lachler, and Charles van Tuyl. *A Handbook of the Cherokee Verb: A Preliminary Study*. Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Cherokee Heritage Center, 2003. ISBN 978-0-9742818-0-3.
- Holmes, Ruth Bradley, and Betty Sharp Smith. *Beginning Cherokee: Talisgo Galiquogi Dideliquasdodi Tsalagi Digohweli*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976.
- Montgomery-Anderson, Brad (May 30, 2008). "A Reference Grammar of Oklahoma Cherokee" (http://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/dspace/bitstream/1808/4212/1/umi-ku-2613_1.pdf) (PDF).
- Montgomery-Anderson, Brad (May 2015). *Cherokee Reference Grammar* (<https://www.oup.com/books/14202890/cherokee-reference-grammar>). Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. ISBN 978-0-8061-4342-2. OCLC 880689691 (<https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/880689691>).
- Robinson, Prentice. *Conjugation Made Easy: Cherokee Verb Study*. Tulsa, Oklahoma: Cherokee Language and Culture, 2004. ISBN 978-1-882182-34-3.
- Scancarelli, Janine (2005). "Cherokee". in Janine Scancarelli and Heather K. Hardy (eds.). *Native Languages of the Southeastern United States*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press in cooperation with the American Indian Studies Research Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington. pp. 351–384. OCLC 56834622 (<https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/56834622>).
- Uchihara, Hiroto (2013). "Tone and Accent in Oklahoma Cherokee" (<https://arts-sciences.buffalo.edu/content/dam/arts-sciences/linguistics/AlumniDissertations/Uchihara%2520dissertation.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwin4Lbj-HnAhUYCTQIHf3sDsQQFjAAegQIBRAB&usg=AOvVaw3f-j0BpEyOFYLfmwUqCziF>) (Ph.D. dissertation). Buffalo, State University of New York.
- Uchihara, Hiroto (2016). *Tone and Accent in Oklahoma Cherokee* (<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/one-and-accent-in-oklahoma-cherokee-9780198739449?cc=mx&lang=en&>). New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-873944-9.

Concerning the syllabary

- Bender, Margaret. 2002. *Signs of Cherokee Culture: Sequoyah's Syllabary in Eastern Cherokee Life*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Bender, Margaret (2008). "Indexicality, voice, and context in the distribution of Cherokee scripts". *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. **2008** (192): 91–104. doi:10.1515/ijsl.2008.037 (<https://doi.org/10.1515%2Fijsl.2008.037>).
- Daniels, Peter T (1996), *The World's Writing Systems*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 587–92.
- Foley, Lawrence (1980), *Phonological Variation in Western Cherokee*, New York: Garland Publishing.
- Kilpatrick, Jack F; Kilpatrick, Anna Gritts, *New Echota Letters*, Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press.
- Scancarelli, Janine (2005), "Cherokee", in Hardy, Heather K; Scancarelli, Janine (eds.), *Native Languages of the Southeastern United States*, Bloomington: Nebraska Press, pp. 351–84.
- Tuchscherer, Konrad; Hair, PEH (2002), "Cherokee and West Africa: Examining the Origins of the Vai Script", *History in Africa*, **29**: 427–86, doi:10.2307/3172173 (<https://doi.org/10.2307%2F3172173>), JSTOR 3172173 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3172173>).
- Sturtevant, William C; Fogelson, Raymond D, eds. (2004), *Handbook of North American Indians: Southeast*, **14**, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, ISBN 0-16-072300-0.
- Walker, Willard; Sarbaugh, James (1993), "The Early History of the Cherokee Syllabary", *Ethnohistory*, **40** (1): 70–94, doi:10.2307/482159 (<https://doi.org/10.2307%2F482159>), JSTOR 482159 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/482159>), S2CID 156008097 (<https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:156008097>).

Further reading

- Bruchac, Joseph. *Aniyunwiya/Real Human Beings: An Anthology of Contemporary Cherokee Prose*. Greenfield Center, N.Y.: Greenfield Review Press, 1995. ISBN 978-0-912678-92-4
- Charles, Julian (2010). "A History of Iroquoian Languages" (https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/bitstream/handle/1993/4175/julian_charles.pdf?sequence%3D1&ved=2ahUKEwiMiZnTpdrnAhUHVK0KHekjBbwQFjAKegQIBBAK&usg=AOvVaw2eiUiDUCBQ82kt1WYHAXX) (Ph.D. dissertation). Winnipeg, University of Manitoba.

- Cook, William Hinton (1979). *A Grammar of North Carolina Cherokee*. Ph.D. diss., Yale University. [OCLC 7562394](#). (<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/7562394>)
- King, Duane H. (1975). *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Cherokee Language*. Ph.D. diss., University of Georgia. [OCLC 6203735](#). (<http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/6203735>)
- Lounsbury, Floyd G. (1978). "Iroquoian Languages". in Bruce G. Trigger (ed.). *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 15: Northeast. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution. pp. 334–343. [OCLC 12682465](#) (<https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/12682465>)
- Munro, Pamela (ed.) (1996). *Cherokee Papers from UCLA*. UCLA Occasional Papers in Linguistics, no. 16. [OCLC 36854333](#) (<https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/36854333>)
- Pulte, William, and Durbin Feeling. 2001. "Cherokee". In: Garry, Jane, and Carl Rubino (eds.) *Facts About the World's Languages: An Encyclopedia of the World's Major Languages: Past and Present*. New York: H. W. Wilson. (Viewed at the [Rosetta Project](#) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20150623030728/http://rosettaproject.org/>))
- Scancarelli, Janine (1987). *Grammatical Relations and Verb Agreement in Cherokee*. Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles. [OCLC 40812890](#) (<https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/40812890>)
- Scancarelli, Janine. "Cherokee Writing." *The World's Writing Systems*. 1998: Section 53.

External links

- Cherokee-English Dictionary Online Database (<http://www.cherokeedictionary.net/>)
- Cherokee wordlist lookup (<https://language.cherokee.org/word-list/>)
- Cherokee Nation Dikaneisdi (Word List) (<https://language.cherokee.org/language-programs/cherokee-language-consortium/>)
- Cherokee numerals (<http://www.languagesandnumbers.com/how-to-count-in-cherokee/en/chr/>)
- Cherokee – Sequoyah transliteration system (<http://www.transliteration.com/transliteration/en/cherokee/sequoyah/>) – online conversion tool
- Unicode Chart (<https://www.unicode.org/charts/PDF/U13A0.pdf>)
- Cherokee Nation CWY ᏣᎳᎴ ሃଓଁ ତ୍ୟଥ୍ୟଗ୍ରୀ ଓ୍ଦ୍ୟବ୍ୟୋତ୍ସାହିତୀ ତେଗିନାଲୋତ୍ସି ଉନାଦୋତ୍ୱନ୍ଵି / Cherokee Language Technology ([https://web.archive.org/web/20150930042006/http://www.cherokee.org/languagetech/en-us/%E1%8E%A3%E1%8F%AA%E1%8F%85%E1%8F%92\(home\).aspx](https://web.archive.org/web/20150930042006/http://www.cherokee.org/languagetech/en-us/%E1%8E%A3%E1%8F%AA%E1%8F%85%E1%8F%92(home).aspx))

Language archives, texts, audio, video

- Cherokee Phoenix (<http://www.cherokeephoenix.org/?sectionId=458>), bilingual newspaper in Cherokee and English
- Cherokee Traditions digital archive (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140921023619/http://www.wcu.edu/library/digitalcollections/cherokeetraditions/LanguageAndLiterature/>), from [Western Carolina University](#)
- Cherokee New Testament Online (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190825010742/https://www.cherokeenewtestament.com/>) Online translation of the New Testament. Currently the largest Cherokee document on the internet.
- "Native American Audio Collections: Cherokee" (<https://web.archive.org/web/20130302034703/https://www.amphilsoc.org/exhibit/natamaudio/cherokee>). [American Philosophical Society](#). Archived from the original (<http://www.amphilsoc.org/exhibit/natamaudio/cherokee>) on 2013-03-02. Retrieved 2013-05-20.
- Cherokee Language Texts (<http://cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/cdm/search/collection/p16057coll24/searchterm/cherokee/field/langua mode/all/conn/and/order/nosort>), from the [Boston Athenaeum: Schoolcraft Collection of Books in Native American Languages](#). Digital Collection. (<http://cdm.bostonathenaeum.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16057coll24>)

Language lessons and online instruction

- Free online Cherokee classes (<https://learn.cherokee.org/>) from the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma
- Cherokee Language Online (<http://www.culturev.com/cherokee/cherokee.html>) (Beginning dialogues, audio, flashcards and grammar from culturev.com)
- Cherokee Language downloadable flashcard decks (<https://ankiweb.net/shared/decks/cherokee>) (Some based on culturev.com)

- [Mango Languages](https://mangolanguages.com/available-languages/learn-cherokee/) (<https://mangolanguages.com/available-languages/learn-cherokee/>) has free lessons via their website or app
 - [Online Cherokee language classes](https://web.archive.org/web/20140826120646/http://cherokeelanguage.wcu.edu/classes/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20140826120646/http://cherokeelanguage.wcu.edu/classes/>), from [Western Carolina University](#)
 - [Cherokee Language Program at Western Carolina University on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/WCUCherokeeLanguage?_fb_noscript=1) (https://www.facebook.com/WCUCherokeeLanguage?_fb_noscript=1), additional materials
 - [CherokeeLessons.com](https://web.archive.org/web/20110708142042/http://www.cherokeelessons.com/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110708142042/http://www.cherokeelessons.com/>) (Hosts Creative Commons licensed materials including a textbook covering grammar and many hours of challenge/response based audio lesson files).
 - [Cherokee language YouTube videos for beginners](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuqKGb4re9a5TssItxrTw6Q), by [tsasuyeda](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuqKGb4re9a5TssItxrTw6Q>)
 - [Cherokee speakers](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZEkBhbUA_CWtVSnXEf64ny7pUwlJFfgI) (https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZEkBhbUA_CWtVSnXEf64ny7pUwlJFfgI), Cherokee Nation
-

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cherokee_language&oldid=968398199"

This page was last edited on 19 July 2020, at 04:26 (UTC).

Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#); additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.